DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 265 250 UD 024 650

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TITLE Towards a Methodology for the Study of Australian Multi-Cultural Educational Approaches.
PUB DATE 83
NOTE 25p.; In: Comparative and International Studies and the Theory and Practice of Education. Proceedings of the Annual Conference of the Australian Comparative and International Education Society (11th, Hamilton, New Zealand, August 21-24, 1983). See UD 024 646.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Acculturation; *Colonialism; *Comparative Education; *Cross Cultural Studies; Cultural Background; *Ethnic Groups; Ethnic Relations; Foreign Countries; Minority Groups; *Multicultural Education; Research Methodology
IDENTIFIERS *Australia; Australians

ABSTRACT

This paper proposes a methodology for research on Australian multi-cultural education based on the idea that patterns of domination and subordination in the cross-cultural colonial context of the Third World countries can be examined to establish a comparative concept of cultural accommodation. The paper maintains that an examination of the attitudes, assumptions, and resulting interactions in the classical colonial relationship may help to increase understanding of the relationships between dominant and subordinate ethnic groups in the Australian situation. It is argued that the formulation of multicultural education policies at present relies on a subjective ethnocentrism on the part of the dominant group. Policies tend to assume that the culture of specific ethnic groups is readily identifiable and that appropriate educational programs can be formulated. Unless policy makers are more fully aware of the nature of cultural diversity and the cultural reality of individuals within minority ethnic groups, policies will continue to reflect the ideologically committed views of the majority culture. Initially, a distinction must be made between culture and ethnicity. Further elaboration of a theory of cultural accommodation may lead to greater insights into researchers' attitudes and values and how they are reflected in the Australian educational system, and may also inspire new approaches and methods in the schools. (CG)

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TOWARDS A METHODOLOGY FOR THE STUDY OF AUSTRALIAN MULTI-CULTURAL EDUCATIONAL APPROACHES

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Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Comparative and International Education Society, Christchurch, New Zealand, 21-24 August, 1983.

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TOWARDS A METHODOLOGY FOR THE STUDY OF AUSTRALIAN MULTI-CULTURAL EDUCATIONAL APPROACHES USING THE IDEA OF "CULTURAL ACCOMMODATION" IN THE CROSS-CULTURAL CONTEXT OF DEVELOPING THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES

J. BENOIT and ALAN CUMMING

The methodology proposed is based on the idea that by examining patterns of domination and sub-ordination in the cross-cultural colonialist context of third world countries, and specifically, the manner in which such interaction influences the process of cultural accommodation, a comparative dimension of the concept of "accommodation" can be established. This concept can, in turn, be examined in terms of its appropriateness and potential value in our own "internal" colonial situation, and its possible implications in formulating multicultural educational policies in our schools. The persistence of ethnicity may be attributed, as Cohen suggests, to the effect of "intensive interaction between ethnic groupings." [1] Such an approach enables us to take into account both subjective identification, as well as the specific cultural attributes manifested by groups. By focusing on the nature of the interaction taking place, moreover, one can also consider, importantly, the reasons that the content of culture associated with ethnic groups often undergoes significant alteration.

of which we recognize an "observed" or "assumed" connection as relevant or meaningful.

From this description several inferences can be drawn in respect to the limitations of Verstehen. One of its most obvious limitations is its dependence upon knowledge derived from personal experience. Weber, for example, emphasizes that an individual's ability to define behaviour will vary with the amount and quality of the personal experience, and the intellective capacity of the observer. There is also the importance of the concept of "Wertbeziehung" in that not only are the values of the persons making the decisions and their culture involved, but also those of the persons who are affected by the decisions. The nature and degree of ethnocentrism, particularly in the dominant group, which has been influenced and strengthened by the nature of our colonial legacy[6] and institutionalized patterns of behaviour resulting from it, would clearly influence decision making. This emphasizes the importance of the question of subjectivity which writers on Verstehen have failed to reach agreement on.[7] This awareness of ethnocentrism would lead us to question, for example, Schutz's[8] statement that "common sense knowledge of everyday life is sufficient for coming to terms with [the] cultural objects, with institutions in which [the] social reality originally has been interpreted by human beings, which [the] human beings experience as a reality within their world of culture, which they [the] intersubjectively understand, and which [the] have to deal with or to change by their actions within it."

It is too easy to take for granted our actual or potential knowledge of the meaning of human actions and their products as the correct or "real" meaning. The subjective feelings which may be communicable only to members of that particular group, emphasize the inadequacy of present approaches to ethnic diversity which assume that participants in the dominant cultural group can determine policies which adequately reflect the realities of those belonging to ethnic minority groups.[4] Emphasis on our society as a culturally pluralist society and the resulting emphasis on objective understanding of the cultural reality of specific ethnic groups does have a specific ideological effect.[5]

Complexities involved in the concept of ethnicity[6] suggest the simplistic nature of present approaches. They also reflect, however, the difficulty of establishing a satisfactory approach to determining the needs of these groups. Despres,[7] in fact, suggests that in spite of recent work and studies of the concept of ethnicity, "it is apparent that a theoretical framework capable of informing comparative ethnic studies has not yet emerged". On another level, however, he emphasizes: "a convergent line of development is evidenced by a glossary of concepts which includes, inter alia, ... ethnic boundaries, populations, groups, and stratifications, and boundary maintenance and incorporation processes such as accommodation, assimilation, and conflict."[8]

[illegible]

necessarily be appropriate for the "internal" Australian colonial situation. Placed in the comparative dimension, a basis for comparative study is established without implying that solutions or hypotheses based on an understanding of the concept will be identical in each case.

The choice of developing Third World countries as a basis for a proposed comparative study needs to be examined in terms of its relevance and potential value for providing insights into the relationships between the dominant, "mainstream" cultural groups and subordinate ethnic minority groups in Australia.

Traditionally Australian comparative education has been restricted to the study of education in Western "democracies". This is based on the assumption that it is in these areas that similarities are to be found. Some comparative educationists state this explicitly. Halls,[16] for example, in outlining his cultural method of comparative studies, emphasizes that he is specifically concerned with comparing like with like and with ascertaining how far the theories and practices extant in one "industrialized" society are susceptible of operation in another, similar society. Holmes [17] similarly restricts his methodology to emphasizing the comparative perspective in relation to Western industrialized countries. One could suggest that all too often the basis of this assumption is related to the perpetuation of the myth that education on the local scene is an essentially homogenous venture in a monocultural society. Australia may be able to more profitably develop insights by examining the more strikingly, pluralistic cross-cultural context of some Third World countries. Remi Clignet,[18] writing in the context of African education, focuses on questions arising from the impact and conflict created by different cultures impinging on the individual. His concerns illustrate the potential value of examining other areas, and policies developed there in response to an awareness of cultural diversity, especially, since in these areas the fact of heterogeneity has long been recognised and accepted. The validity of the selection of Third World countries

as a basis for comparative research rests not only on the more immediately apprehended aspect of heterogeneity; insights into attitudes and values in a pluralistic society can be gained. These attitudes and values may be related to the influence of our colonial past and persisting colonialistic frameworks of thinking.

Writers [19] in the context of Third World countries have examined the nature of the colonial enterprise with a view to particularly explaining the attitudes developed in colonizer-colonized relationships and the persistence of such colonialist attitudes in the neo-colonial present. These ideas have been developed within the context of colonialism in its manifestations in what can be termed "classical colonialism" or "nation to nation" [20] colonialism. In drawing comparisons between colonialism and colonialist attitudes in this situation and issues relating to the question of cultural diversity in the Australian context, both the basis, as well as the limitations of such comparisons, must be considered.

The concept of "internal" colonialism can provide a useful framework for examining patterns of ethnic and racial dominance in a comparative perspective and developing insights into dominant/sub-ordinate relationships in our own culturally diverse society. "Classical" and "internal" colonialism share common roots, primarily that of the fact of colonialism where the enterprise encompasses the political, social and economic life of those countries involved in a situation in which "the colonizer rather than the colonized holds power for purposes the colonizer defines".[21]

Colonialism in its classical context involves "nation to nation" domination. Altback and Kelly also extend the usefulness and relevance of the concept of colonialism to the "internal" colonial situation in relationship to this definition. They see "internal colonialism" as

> the dominance of a "nation" (defined geographically, linguistically or culturally) within the national borders of another nation - state by another group or groups. Some

> of these dominated nations may at one time have been independent, such as American Indian tribes, but they are not at this time, independent.[22]

"Internal" colonialism has, historically, entailed a dominance established through usurpation and replacement. Altbach and Kelly believe the Indian tribes in America and the Aborigines in Australia may be considered colonized in that, although they were once independent, they are no longer independent political entities but rather subjugated groups whose rights to property are determined by the host government. Regardless of good intentions or even unintentional attitudes the effect is the subjugation of, and discrimination against, minority groups by the dominant group.

Further consideration could be given to the appropriateness and relevance of the idea of internal colonialism to our situation in terms of criteria advanced by other writers. These criteria range from very specific conditions which restrict the general usefulness of the concept by writers such as Van den Berghe,[23] to a more general and universal application of the concept accepted by writers such as Lyons [24] and Carnoy.[25]

Van den Berghe in defining "internal" colonialism refers to it as an "ideal" type and it is clear that the concept (referring to such phenomena as the rule of one ethnic group over other such groups, the presence of internal government within a government especially created to rule the subject peoples, and relations of economic inequality in which subject people are relegated to positions of dependency and inferiority in the division of labour and the relations of production) is appropriate for Aborigines but is questionable in terms of other ethnic minority groups.

Lyons establishes criteria which are more widely embracing and which can be seen as applicable to these groups, and he specifically sees the "mind set" of the person who is in power, that is the colonizer, as the main thing that distinguishes the colonialistic from other forms of human behaviour; a psychological justification

to rationalize subjugation of others. Other writers would also extend the concept of colonialism to groups such as women, blacks and the working class on the basis of similarities of institutional experiences.[26] Carnoy,[27] for example, emphasizes the relationships of blacks and the working class to educational institutions as being basically similar to that existing in the classical colonial situation in that they do not control schools, either their uses or their content, just as the colonized had little control. It would be easy to simply accept this broader definition and apply it ad hoc to ethnic minorities in our society. However we propose that an analysis of relationships between the dominant and minority ethnic groups in Australian society can establish a case for arguing that these relationships reflect the relationships existing between colonizer and colonized in the nation to nation classical colonial situation, and that inequalities in our society can be perceived in terms of persisting colonialist attitudes. The important synthesizing element between "classical" and "internal" colonialism which is relevant to ethnic minorities in our society but not relevant to other groups such as women and the working class is the nature of the dominance which has its roots in racism and the development of racial ideology and ethnocentrism.[28]

Lanternari [29] shows how ethnocentric attitudes are directed, strengthened or weakened by historical conditions. The dominant/sub-ordinate relationships, deriving from racial ideology and ethnocentricism that reflect colonialist attitudes in both the "classical" and "internal" colonial situations makes the concept of "internal" colonialism specifically useful as a framework for viewing dominant and sub-ordinate ethnic groups in our society. Some of the characteristics of both "classical" and "internal" colonialism then that reflect these attitudes and clearly extend the concept of colonialism to include ethnic minority groups are summarized by Blauner:[30] colonized groups are forced to become part of the dominant society; they are disproportionately confined to various categories of low status labour; they are subject in

all areas of their life to white bureaucratic control; their culture is destroyed, depreciated or transformed; and, finally, they are the victims of an ideology of racism which rationalizes the colonizer's domination over them. This does not imply that one would expect practices in both situations to be identical. One could emphasize, for example, how manifestations of racism, racial ideology and ethnocentrism in the internal colonial situation have emphasized the eradication of differences and the absorption of minority groups through assimilation or integration.[31] This, of course, is closely related to the dominant group's significant numerical superiority. In the "classical" colonial situation the minority status of the dominant group meant that assimilation was not an important issue. There the desire for the domination of the indigenous group, the majority, has led in some cases to a rejection of assimilation.[32] Ideologically, however, regardless of whether assimilation as a policy is adopted or rejected, the basis for the decision in varying situations can be associated with ensuring the continued dominance of the colonizer.

The rationale behind the comparative methodology being espoused here is to develop an awareness of how attitudes of racism and ethnocentrism inherent in the "classical" colonial context of developing Third World countries, may be used to develop insights into the self-conceptions and attitudes of the "colonizers" and "colonized", or dominant and sub-ordinate groups in the internal colonial situation. Such attitudes may derive from and reinforce the original power relations in the classical colonial situation. The manifestations may at present be different in that the specific colonial relationship enters less prominently into the lives of individuals so that it may well mean that racial awareness and ethnocentrism will be less overtly manifested, more subtle and institutionalized. In respect to the internally colonized their isolated position as dependent minorities may result, however, in an even clearer definition of difference between themselves and the dominant group and also influence the development of more negative self-conceptions than those perceived in their counterparts in the "classical" colonial situation.[33]

There are institutionalized patterns in our society which suggest the relevance of examining relationships between the dominant and sub-ordinate groups as a reflection of these colonialist attitudes. These attitudes can be specifically related to our colonialist past and the development of ethnocentrism. Hartwig [34] shows how, in the early days of contact, confidence in the material and spiritual superiority of British Christian civilization meant that few colonists came to investigate or respect Aboriginal culture. Aboriginal "incompetence" or "apathy" reinforced the racism implicit in the colonial situation, and encouraged the development of ethnocentrism. Hartwig also emphasizes how manifestations of racism and ethnocentrism often reflect conformity to social norms and historically derived patterns of thought and behaviour. Attitudes which were established in the colonial period, have remained a basic element in our relationship with minority groups. They have extended to all minority groups since the policy of, for example, assimilation, which was developed more specifically with reference to the Aborigines, was extended ad hoc to all minority groups. A study looking at White, Black and Chicano self-images and attitudes conducted by Jennifer Hurstfield [35] has focused on how this colonial relationship can enter into the self-conceptions of the colonizer and the colonized groups in the internal colonial situation. The results of the study support the observation of Fanon, Memmi and others that in a colonialist society the dominant group tends to define itself in universalistic categories, whereas a sub-ordinate racial group is more conscious of racial identity.[36] The study indicates how the concept of colonialism can provide a useful analytical framework that helps to place patterns of racial and ethnic dominance in a broad comparative perspective and thus provides a useful perspective for analysing the processes of cultural transmission in a multicultural society and thus, might, provide a basis for developing sound multicultural educational policies and programmes.

In formulating multicultural policy there appears to exist an ethnocentric assumption on the part of administrators that the culture of specific ethnic groups is readily identifiable and that

policies can then be formulated to make a place for these in curricula and programmes. Even the term "multiculturalism" is used loosely and often uncritically. Multiculturalism is concerned with policies which are more frequently directed towards ethnic groups rather than cultural groups per se. Can a distinction be made between the two? And, if so, how important might the distinction be? It is argued here that there is a distinction and it is this very difference that highlights inadequacies in the present approach to multiculturalism and emphasizes the importance of the dominant/sub-ordinate status of ethnic groups in the community and the importance of colonialist attitudes in our own internal colonial context, in maintaining this dominant/sub-ordinate relationship. It is possible, of course, to speak of culture independently of ethnicity. The issue that must be addressed more closely here, however, is the extent to which ethnicity is accepted simply in terms of cultural differences. Certainly culture is related to ethnicity. Bullivant [37] emphasizes how, in understanding "culture" one must consider how, in their social relations, the members of a society interact through action systems using patterned behavioural styles. Pattern is provided by culture. Ethnic groups' action systems are thus programmed by cultures we feel we can identify. The tendency to define a group as having a certain set of cultural traits which, when aggregated, make up its ethnicity has had significant implications.

Naomi White [38] takes up this issue of the concept of culture and its relationship to ethnicity. She distinguishes three basic conceptions or tests for the existence of culture. The first she terms "culture-as-behaviour" where a culture may be said to exist if "regularities in beliefs, behaviours, relationships and artifacts are evident in a given population." The second is referred to as "culture-as-value orientations" where a culture may be said to exist if common values or orientations may be discerned to underlie the regularities in behaviour. It is the third aspect which Naomi White focusses on that is given relatively less attention than these first two and yet is potentially most significant in respect to ethnicity: that is, culture as "self-identification" and "a sense of community". Emphasis is placed on the validity and importance of participant definitions of

experience. She argues that sub-societal group identity - ethnic identity - is dependent on this sense of community. Other writers similarly emphasize its significance. Bullivant points out that ideationally ethnics are bonded together by "feelings of belongingness and corporate identity".[39] R. A. Schermehorn's [40] definition of an ethnic group emphasizes the same perspective: notwithstanding the relevance of objective cultural manifestation, he believes "a necessary accompaniment is some consciousness of kind among members of the group".

What implications has this focus on the experience of "groupness" and "self-identification" for examining multicultural policies? Importantly it questions the adequacy and potential effect of the present emphasis which is more concerned with the recognition of, and response to, the more objectively apprehended manifestations of culture and it may provide some insight for explaining the lack of commitment and increased questioning of the relevance and impact of multiculturalism in terms of present approaches. Barth [41] suggests a possible explanation for this. He questions the validity of assuming a nexus between an emphasis on objective cultural differences and ethnic identification. He maintains that:

> a reduction in objectively verifiable cultural differences between ethnic groups does not correspond in any simple way with a reduction in the existence of cultural identities, nor with a break down in boundary maintaining processes.

This explanation may help to explain why assimilatory practices in the past have clearly not corresponded in any simple way with a reduction in the persistence of ethnic identities. Jerzy Smolicz [42] shows how, in fact, external pressures may bring forth counter measures that emphasize values that the group members consider as the cultural core of their group. Some such actions by ethnic groups may be observed in a plural society where there may be no persecution but where the ethnic cores may be threatened by assimilation to the ways of the majority.

Conversely, and pertinent to present multicultural approaches, is the probability that an increase in objectively verifiable cultural differences in the schools, will not necessarily correspond with an increased awareness of ethnic group identities.

Barth's view of an ethnic group as a boundary maintenance system emphasizes the significance of participant definition of experience. A most important characteristic of an ethnic group which separates one from the other, is that it: "has a membership which identifies itself, and is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order".[43] What may be seen as problematic in respect to diverse groups in a complex society, then, may not be the objective manifestations of cultural differences themselves as much as the social conditions under which individuals band together as members of an ethnic group. Some deeper understanding of these social conditions contributing to boundary maintenance in a complex, heterogenous society such as our Australian society is, can, it is believed, be fruitfully developed within the framework of "internal" colonialism. Hechter has used the concept of "internal colonialism" [44] as an explanation for the persistence of ethnic identity around peripheral groups in complex societies and to develop an understanding of the relationship between core and peripheral groups. These relations reflect how, as a result of the initial fortuitious advantage gained by one group owing to the uneven wave of industrialization over territorial space, there is a crystallization of the unequal distribution of resources and power between the two groups. Once established, the superordinate group seeks to "stabilize and monopolize its advantages through policies aiming at the institutionalization and perpetuation of the existing stratification system". High status roles are generally reserved for members of this group while members from the sub-ordinate group tend to be denied access to these roles. Hechter refers to this stratification system as the "cultural division of labour". Policies ensuring the maintenance of this status quo may be specifically racist where an individual from the sub-ordinate

group is denied certain roles by the active intervention of the state or they may be institutional racist policies providing differential access to institutions conferring status in the society at large. Hecter's use of the "internal" colonial model is specifically related to cultural groups identified in terms of "core" and "peripheral". His model assumes that these respective groups are to a large extent regionally concentrated. Although pockets of different ethnic groups in Australia do exist, such as Greeks in Melbourne and others as concentrated groups in different areas they are not regionally concentrated in the same respect as those in Hechter's study. Nevertheless, the usefulness and appropriateness of the "internal" colonial model is supported by some of his basic criteria. It has already been shown how, here in Australia, an initial advantage for the dominant group was largely determined by the initial colonial contact. This "early fortuitous advantage" led to a crystallization of the unequal distribution of resources and power, clearly establishing dominant and sub-ordinate groups associated with racial and ethnic origins. This relationship initially established in respect to the Aborigines continued and encompassed other ethnic groups in post-colonial society. The immigration of numerous other ethnic groups, even in relatively large numbers in post-war years, did nothing to challenge the super-ordinate role of the dominant group, owing largely to the position of these new groups as minorities. The stratification system, termed by Hechter, as the "cultural division of labour" has also operated here in the assigning of individuals to specific roles in the social structure on the basis of objective cultural distinctions. This can be seen as significant in examining ethnic group relations in our society, especially in the area of decision making where there is clearly greater concentration of power in the dominant group. This lack of control over their own schooling, as far as ethnic minorities are concerned, Carnoy [45] emphasizes as a reflection of the colonialist pattern. Concentration of decision making in the hands of a particular group tends to perpetuate and ensure this dominance. In as much as present multicultural policies do little

to change this status quo, they are open to criticism. Institutional racist or ethnocentric attitudes in our society have, it is argued, also influenced the cultural division of labour by providing differential access to institutions conferring status in society. It has already been suggested that although there is nominally "equality of opportunity", sub-ordinate groups may be clearly disadvantaged by their ethnic background in terms of their ability to take advantage of these opportunities. The "hidden curriculum" of the school or the school's ideology is seen to effectively discriminate against these students. Even when these students do succeed Jean Martin's study indicated that factors other than accreditation of students may effectively prevent these students moving into higher status areas in the workforce.

We have examined the theoretical perspective which provides the basis of the proposed comparative methodology. What has been emphasized is not simply heterogeneity or even the identification of distinct cultural groups as the important basis of similarity to be emphasized in a comparative approach between our Australian society and that of Third World developing countries. The analysis of the nature of ethnicity and ethnic boundary maintenance suggests that what may be a more fruitful focus is the subjective sense of identify experienced by ethnic group members and the way in which this may be influenced by the sort of interaction taking place between distinct groups in society. These interactions are conceptualized in terms of the extent to which they reflect basically colonialist attitudes. These attitudes may be strikingly apparent in the "classical" colonial context. In the "internal" colonial context they may be more implicit, unconscious and indirect. The comparative approach, by focusing on such interactions may provide a useful method of analysing and revealing specific colonialist attitudes and approaches to difference.

The concept of "internal" colonialism, then, would appear to be a particularly useful focus from which to examine dominant and minority or sub-ordinate ethnic groups in our society, not only

of interaction which may account for the persistence of cultural differences and ethnic identifications. Barth [46] emphasizes, for example, that the emergence of ethnic distinctions needs organizational requirements that involve first a categorization of population in exclusive and imperative status categories and second an acceptance of the principle that standards applied to one such category can be different from that applied to the other. The boundaries which Barth emphasizes in relation to ethnic groups are not so much territorial, (though these may exist) as social boundaries. This view of boundary maintenance and the kind of social interaction affecting it can be used to explain the perpetuation of the notions of a dominant, mainstream culture and that of sub-ordinate ethnic minorities. Although frequent assertions, for example, are made to the effect that it is no longer possible to identify a "mainstream" culture owing to the changes that are evident in this culture as a result of accommodation through social interaction, the "myth" of it persists. It is the ethno-centrism of the dominant (and indeed also the sub-ordinate groups) that distinguishes the difference between "us" and "them" and ensures, through a process of boundary maintenance, that the dominant/sub-ordinate roles are perpetuated. This relationship essentially reflects the attitudes and frame of mind of participants that can be identified as colonialistic.

These different views of culture and, particularly, the distinction between a "culture" and a "cultural group" suggest the importance in determining multicultural policies of finding a framework which will enable us to approach cultural differences and manifestations of ethnic "groupness" in a more meaningful way than simply identifying the more objective regularities of behaviour and culture orientations that can be investigated with observer categories. As Barth observes, a particular ethnic group may change the content of its anthropological culture in the course of time yet retain its internal cohesion as a group. Similarly such a group may also acquire entirely new notions about its origin and background, shifting its ascriptive loyalty to other

but it may also lose its original feelings of group identity altogether. The reasons for such changes in ethnic groups may be complex. But a significant and continuing factor in accounting for these changes is the sort of interaction operating between the dominant and sub-ordinate groups in a society and the response of these groups to such dominance. The outcomes of ethnic encounter in our "internal" colonial context can be examined as a function of the interaction of migrant, receiver and process variables in a similar way to which the outcomes of racial encounter can be viewed as a function of colonized, colonizer and process variables in the "classical" colonial situation.

In proposing the methodology being extrapolated in this paper Francis maintains that comparative education may have reached the stage when "it can accept a simple, tested mode of thought without searching any further for an intellectual identity spelt out in terms of ever-increasing methodological novelty." [47] Francis locates the methodology clearly in the tried and tested hypothetico-deductive mode.

Francis makes only a minor attempt to support or justify the methodology yet the methodology has merit not only in terms of its appropriateness in relation to "classical" and "internal" colonialism, but also when it is examined in respect to methodological issues raised by writers working specifically in the field of comparative education. Lawson [48] supports the view that there is considerable scope and range available in both the area of methodology as well as interests in Comparative Education, and that the field can profit more from the "tension of difference" than from any "premature, artificial or oppressive unification". The methodology being proposed does deal with the issues that Lawson argues Comparative Education should be concerned with: firstly, it concentrates on the task of clarifying terms which we use, which accords with current work in the philosophy of education; secondly, it is vitally concerned

concerned with the necessary task of abstracting "those vital attitudes and values which lie largely below the level of individual consciousness and which are manifested in certain similarities in the ways groups of people behave in certain situations or over time, or both"; [49] fourthly, it is theory constructive - that is directed towards the conditional relationships which will allow for both regional and universal interpretations of comparative subjects; and, finally, it does proceed from identifiable social problems to their implications for educational institutions, thus increasing both the theoretical and practical capability of the field.

Anderson [50] emphasizes that comparative education focuses around a particular set of interests, which makes use of concepts and methods that are borrowed from academic neighbours. Anthropology, he observes has contributed little to study of education in different types of society. A possible reason for this, it is suggested, is that interest in cultural particularities has inhibited appreciation of commonalities. The use of anthropological case studies here is directed more specifically towards an increased understanding of the processes of interaction between dominant and sub-ordinate groups rather than the study of culture per se. In this respect much of what can be learned from observing how Western schools function in developing societies could help to provide a useful focus for educational policies concerned with instruction of children from ethnic minority groups.

Vandra Masemann [51] emphasizes the value of the anthropological approach to comparative education based on the interface between an "outside" formalized educational system and the "inside" world of the kin based observational learning situation. This perspective, it is suggested, can be used to help to understand the reasons that ethnic minorities in both America and elsewhere experience school failure. Several very basic assumptions underlie the anthropological approach to the study of schools and schooling.

The main one is that education itself is involved in the transmission of culture in all its aspects. Comparative studies may then help to delineate relevant variables more precisely and objectively.

Further support for the methodology lies in its incorporation of some important principles of comparative methodology, emphasized by other leading comparative educationalists. In this methodology, for example, the concept of cultural accommodation provides a unifying concept that enables a meaningful justaposition to be established between the Third World countries and the Australian milieu. This provides the extra dimension to the total thinking process which Bereday [52] maintains is at once the "hardest point to cross" in comparative studies and the "most substantial" contribution that comparative studies in general have to make. It thus would provide a genuine comparative approach in contrast with more straight forward area studies which, as Bereday points out, are frequently not necessarily comparative, even when a number of different areas are studied. Meaningful justaposition is indispensable to a study which purports to use the comparative methodology.

The scope of the study being proposed is deliberately narrow in its concept. The value of restricting the scope of the proposed study to an in depth analysis of the idea of cultural accommodation and its implications for policy makers can be supported as methodologically sound in terms of Holmes' [53] general consideration of the "problem approach" in comparative education. The initial problem, that of devising policies which reflect adequately the nature and extent of cultural diversity in Australia, can be accepted as a significant national issue - economically, socially and politically - with a clear educational dimension. Yet, as Holmes cautions, further, deeper analysis of the "same" problems might reveal considerable differences from one country to another that are more of "kind" than "degree". Some such differences can be isolated in respect to classical colonialism in Third World countries and the "internal" colonialism evident in the Australian context. Holmes argues the importance of formulating the perceived problem as precisely as possible in order to break it down for further study and to see to

what extent it is universally applicable. The proposed methodology, by narrowing the focus to an analysis of the idea of cultural accommodation, would attempt to do this. It may, furthermore, provide a valuable methodological contribution in an area where Holmes points out the process of problem identification and analysis are as yet weakly developed - the area of the development of general concepts.

Unless policy makers are more fully aware of the nature of cultural diversity and the cultural reality of individuals within minority ethnic groups, policies introduced will continue to reflect the ethnocentric and ideologically committed views of the majority culture. This methodology may provide a possible means of responding to the challenge Holmes identifies in comparative education today: the development of techniques of study which will enable more realistic, less ideologically determined responses to be made. Thus, in emphasizing problem analysis and the adoption of hypothetical solutions, the aim is not to discover final truths and unconditional laws of social development. "Reality" can be described rather in terms of generalizations and specific initial conditions. The emphasis is then on the development of a theoretical, generalizing science of comparative education to assist in describing more adequately the initial conditions in respect to which new policies can be formulated.

Hopkins [54] refers to the value of a study undertaken by Margaret Mead comparing our educational system with indigenous educational systems of some cultures in the South Sea Islands as an example of how useful comparisons are sometimes ones that "cross large cultural gaps". He sees it as a necessary process in the attempt to overcome tendencies towards culturally biased analyses based on a shallow understanding of other cultures.

In analysing the concept of accommodation in this way and then assessing, perhaps by way of case studies, its relevance to our own

Australian situation of cultural diversity there is an earnest endeavour to make the study of this particular educational problem, which is, by its very nature, more frequently influenced by ideological commitment and value judgements more cognisance of the danger in a study dealing with cultural reality of the concept of Wertbeziehung [55] or interdependence. The methodology proposed considers the analysis of "accommodation" aims at theoretical conceptualization while the case study would attempt some investigation of the possible relevance of this concept in the context of cultural diversity in an Australian school.

From the insights gained from the analysis of the concept of cultural accommodation it is likely that some normative statements and suggested lines of approach might be made. While the "common" basis for comparison in respect to colonialism can be established the implications this may have for ethnic minorities in Australia may be very different from strategies considered appropriate in developing countries. It may be in terms of our awareness of these differences that we can develop a greater understanding or, or insight into, our own attitudes and values, and the way these are reflected in our educational system. Alternatively, it may be that an awareness of some specific areas of similarity in respect to cultural diversity and the sort of interactions taking place between dominant and sub-ordinate groups, will direct attention to the value of considering new approaches and methods in our schools so that cultural differences are not only recognized and acknowledged but also responded to in a meaningful way.

Notes and References

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